

Please amend the claims as follows:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Original): A process for the manufacture of alkyl N-alkoxalyl-alaninates, alkylO-CO-CO-NH-CH(CH₃)-CO-Oalkyl, which comprises reacting alanine with a dialkyl oxalate under substantially non-acidic conditions, the reaction being carried out without the presence of an added base or added alkanol.
2. (Original): A process according to claim 1, wherein the dialkyl oxalate is a di(C₁₋₈-alkyl) oxalate.
3. (Original): A process according to claim 2, wherein the di(C₁₋₈-alkyl) oxalate is a di(C₁₋₄-alkyl) oxalate.
4. (Currently amended): A process according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~, wherein the molar ratio of alanine to dialkyl oxalate is from about 1 : 2 to about 1 : 10.
5. (Original): A process according to claim 4, wherein the molar ratio of alanine to dialkyl oxalate is from about 1 : 3 to about 1 : 6.
6. (Original): A process according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 5~~, wherein the reaction is carried out at a temperature from 120°C to 200°C.

7. (Original): A process according to claim 6, wherein the reaction is carried out at a temperature from 135°C to 160°C.

8. (Original): A process according to any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein the reaction is carried out in such a way as to ensure that as much as possible of the alkanol produced during the reaction remains in the reaction system either by carrying out the reaction under atmospheric pressure with cooling of the vapor phase of the reaction mixture to promote the return of the alkanol into the reaction system, or by carrying out the reaction at elevated pressure in a closed system.

9. (Original): A process for the manufacture of N-alkoxalyl-alanine which comprises reacting alanine with a dialkyl oxalate under substantially non-acidic conditions wherein the reaction is carried out under atmospheric pressure in the presence of an organic base by heating the reaction mixture for 4 to 12 hours, preferably for 6 to 10 hours, to a temperature below the boiling point of the organic base, which, depending on the employed organic base is from 60°C to 160°C, preferably from 80°C to 120°C, most preferably from 90°C to 110°C, thereafter removing any low boiling organic base from the reaction mixture by distillation and isolating the desired N-alkoxalyl-alanine obtained as the major product.

10. (Original): N-Ethoxalyl-alanine of the formula $C_2H_5O-CO-CO-NH-CH(CH_3)-COOH$.